J. Helminthol. Soc. Wash.
58(1), 1991, pp. 116–117

Research Note

Synonymy of *Hofmonostomum* Harwood, 1939, with *Paramonostomum* Lühe, 1909 (Digenea: Notocotylidae)

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ABSTRACT: The genus *Hofmonostomum* Harwood, 1939, is shown to have been established on the basis of characters derived from misinterpretation of the anatomy of the sole species, *H. himantopidis* Harwood, 1939. The species is consistent with the anatomy of *Paramonostomum* species. *Hofmonostomum* is placed in synonymy with *Paramonostomum* and the new combination *P. himantopidis* (Harwood, 1939) Cribb, 1991, is proposed.

KEY WORDS: Digenea, Notocotylidae, *Hofmonostomum, Paramonostomum,* taxonomy, synonymy.

The author recently had the opportunity to examine the holotype (United States National Museum Helminth Collection No. 30037) and the 3 paratypes (USNM No. 40615) of *Hofmonostomum himantopidis* Harwood, 1939. This species was described by Harwood (1939) on the basis of the 4 specimens mentioned above (2 mounted, 2 unmounted) from a black-necked stilt, *Himantopus mexicanus,* from Puerto Rico. Harwood recognized the new genus for 2 features. First, he recorded that, uniquely for the Notocotylinae, the vitelline follicles extended posterior to the anterior margin of the testes to near the end of the body. In other genera the vitelline follicles terminate at the anterior margin of the testes. Second, he recorded a weakly developed median ventral ridge such as is seen in *Catatropis* Odhner, 1905, but without accompanying lateral ventral papillae. On the basis of these characters the genus *Hofmonostomum* has been accepted by subsequent authors (e.g., Yamaguti, 1971; Groschaft and Tenora, 1981; Schell, 1985).

Inspection of the holotype and mounted paratype using Nomarski interference microscopy showed that the vitelline follicles in both specimens in fact terminate at or near the anterior margin of the testes. In the holotype the follicles on one side extend just posterior to the anterior margin of the testis but on the other side and in

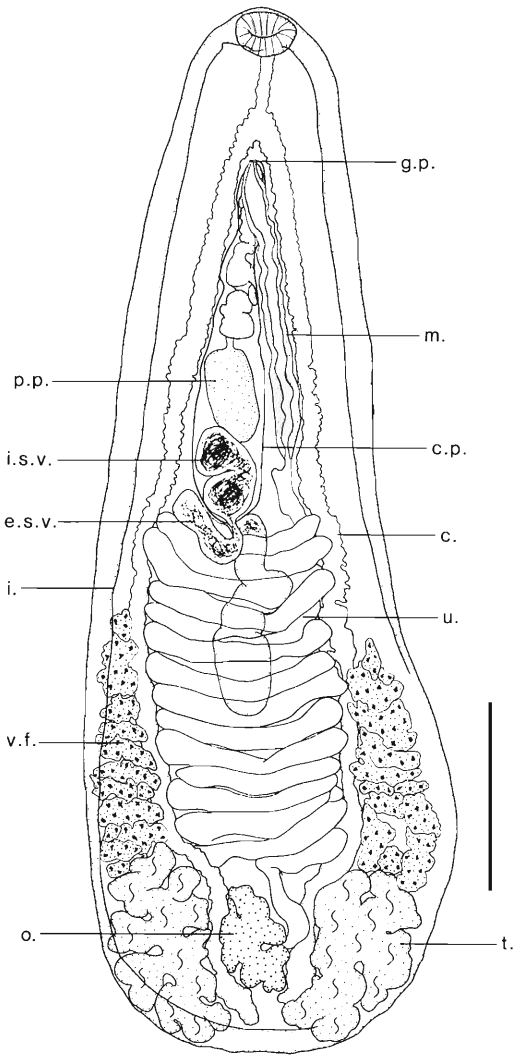

Figure 1. ***Paramonostomum himantopidis*** **comb. n. c., cecum; c.p., cirrus pouch; e.s.v., external seminal vesicle; g.p., genital pore; i., infolding of lateral margin; i.s.v., interval seminal vesicle; m., metraterm; o., ovary; p.p., pars prostatica; t., testis; u., uterus; v.f., vitelline follicles. Scale bar = 200 μm.**

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the mounted paratype they terminate close to the anterior margin of the testes. In the holotype, and to a lesser extent in the paratype, the lateral margins of the specimen are curved inwards and include portions of the lobed margin of the testes. This evidently produced the impression of vitelline follicles lateral to the testes which is, however, clearly not the case. The mounted paratype is figured here (Fig. 1) as it is the less ambiguous specimen.

In neither mounted specimen was a median ventral ridge of the type seen in *Catatropis* species discerned. In the holotype the ventral surface is somewhat folded, and presumably as an artifact of fixation, has an irregular ridge visible in places. This does not appear to be a genuine structure. No ridge was visible at all on the mounted paratype. Given that Nomarski microscopy was used, it is reasonable to believe that a ridge would have been observed if present. There was no sign of a median ridge on either of the unmounted paratypes which were examined under a dissecting microscope.

In view of the observations outlined above, the 2 characters that were used to distinguish *Hofmonostomum* are not valid. Alternative distinguishing characters were not found. Consequently, the genus cannot be distinguished from the large, cosmopolitan genus *Paramonostomum* Lühe, 1909. This genus is characterized by the complete absence of ventral surface ridges and papillae and has the vitelline follicles terminating at the anterior margin of the testes. I therefore propose that *Hofmonostomum* should be considered a junior synonym of *Paramonostomum* and that the new combination *Paramonostomum himantopidis* (Harwood, 1939) Cribb, 1991, be recognized.

The question of the validity of *P. himantopidis* with respect to other *Paramonostomum* species is beyond the scope of the present study. The genus contains about 50 nominal species, many of which are separated by only the most superficial of characters. It seems not at all improbable that critical review will show *P. himantopidis* to be either a junior or senior synonym of existing *Paramonostomum* combinations. It is noteworthy that *P. himantopidis* appears not to have been recorded since its original description (see Hinojos and Canaris, 1988).

Thanks are due to Dr. J. R. Lichtenfels of the USNM for kindly lending type specimens.

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